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Newfoundland Labrador

Tourism, Culture and Recreation
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Province Asks Federal Government to Review Arts Funding Cuts

The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, has expressed concern over the Federal Government's recent announcement to eliminate two arts subsidy programs – Trade Routes and PromArt.

"Cutting these programs means yet another hurdle for our artists," said Minister Jackman. "Culture is central to our social and economic lives. Funding cutbacks such as these not only hurt our artists directly, but also hurt efforts being made to bring our cultural product to the international marketplace."

Trade Routes, a development program which helps organizations in the arts and cultural sector export their products to international markets, totals about $9 million annually and is administered by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Federal Government will stop financing the program effective March 31, 2009, though some aspects will not terminate until March 31, 2010.

PromArt, a $4.7 million program for artist travel grants administered through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, will also terminate on March 31, 2009.

Several cultural entities from Newfoundland and Labrador have received funding from these programs. The St. John's International Women's Film Festival and Rattling Books (Alca Productions) have both been recipients of Trade Routes. Local artists Andy Jones and Jim Payne, as well as Theatre Newfoundland and Labrador, have benefited from PromArt funding.

Additionally, both programs have significantly supported the Atlantic Film Festival and the East Coast Music Awards. Trade Routes and PromArt have provided funding to help bring industry professionals from all over the world to these events which enable artists to form new partnerships and market their product to a broader audience.

"The loss of these programs means there will be a funding gap for our artists," said Minister Jackman. "As a province, we strongly urge the Federal Government to review this decision and look towards creating new and perhaps even better programs to fill that gap." In 2006, the Provincial Government released *Creative Newfoundland and Labrador – The Blueprint for Development and Investment in Culture*, which included a commitment of $17.6 million over three years to preserve and promote the arts and culture sectors.

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